

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today released the following statement regarding the American Clean Energy and Security (ACES) Act of 2009 which passed the House by a vote of 219-212.

"As a stalwart supporter of conservation and environmental protection, I believe the threat of global climate change is a serious issue that must be addressed. We need meaningful solutions that will help us decrease the use of fossil fuels, end our reliance on foreign oil and transition us to a new, sustainable energy economy that creates jobs.

"I approached this legislation with two questions in mind. First, would the bill fight global climate change and make the investments to deliver the results we need? Secondly, is this bill a good deal for Arizona? Unfortunately, the answer to both of these questions is no.

"This bill literally re-commits the United States to coal, a step backwards at a time when it is vitally important for us to move forward. Clean, renewable energy should be our chief priority, not fossil fuels.

"In Arizona, this bill asks us to pay more for our energy, but fails to deliver what is necessary to help us grow our emerging solar industry. I introduced an amendment to improve the bill to make financing more available for solar energy. However, my amendment was blocked and didn't receive a vote.

"I am also deeply concerned by a provision stuck into this bill that would give the federal government the power to overrule Arizona's decisions about where we choose to place our power lines. The Arizona Corporation Commission should retain control of these decisions, not regulators in Washington.

"I remain committed to meaningful reform. I believe we can do better and I look forward to working with my colleagues to achieve a better bill."